Astoria Nordic Heritage Park

Troll Tales

What are Trolls?

Trolls are part of Nordic myths and folklore. Other words for trolls are gnomes, elves, and nisse, tomte, or tonttu in the Nordic languages. Some trolls are dwarves and some are giants. We have the small kind in Astoria Nordic Heritage Park. Trolls can be mischievous and baffling to humans who they sometimes try to trick or deceive. Some trolls are helpful to animals and some may be only visible to children.

Troll Tales Synopsis

The six trolls in the Nordic Park are assumed to be immigrants.

Viktor brought his grandfather's pipe to remind him of his grandfather.

Margit needed new friends in a new country so she found Fat Cat.

Olle (pronounced Oh-luh) could only bring one toy but sometimes visitors to the park bring him new ones.

Sven brought his accordion and remembers the old tunes so people in Astoria can dance them too.

Annette (pronounced Annettah) is outgoing and likes to sing with the sea lions. Come at night and maybe you'll hear her.

Leif (pronounced lafe) is very shy because he grew up in a cave so he hides under a leaf.

Viktor, Everyone's Friend

By James Dott

If the trolls of Astoria Nordic Heritage Park had a president, it would be Viktor. Viktor is the only troll who is friends with all the other trolls. Yes, even grumpy Leif counts him as a friend. You can see by his teeth (no tusks yet) that he is young. But young for a troll is still pretty old. Viktor is 550 years old. But he hasn't always been a friend to all. Let him tell you his story.

Hello, my name is Viktor and yes, I know smoking is bad for the health. I carry this pipe but I do not smoke it anymore. It belonged to my grandfather (he did smoke it) and it has great meaning for me — more about that later. The pipe gives me strength. My name means winner, champion, conqueror. I have conquered many things in my life. That has been good and also bad. I conquered smoking. I conquered being a mean and nasty bully. I conquered being a lonely outcast.

Like all the other trolls here, I grew up in a cave in Big Mountain. I was a big baby, too big to sleep in the stone crib my brothers and sisters had used so I slept on the floor. Since I was big, I ate more than anyone else in my family. I was always hungry and so I stole food from my older brothers and sisters. Since I was bigger than them, they weren't strong enough to stop me. One day I stole my father's bowl of bat stew. He was still bigger than me and he took me by the tail, went to the mouth of our cave, swung me over his head three times, and tossed me out over the forest. I landed in an icy lake but managed to climb out. Luckily, I was tall enough to touch bottom because trolls can't swim.

There I was alone in the night, freezing cold. I looked around and saw the lights of a human house not far down the hill. I ran there, crashed open the door, chased out the humans and their dog and sat down to eat all their food and warm myself by their fire. The fear in their eyes and the whining of their dog made me feel good. I began to go from farm-to-farm chasing off the humans and taking whatever I wanted. I became known as *Troll the Terrible.* I was proud of that name. Then the human king sent soldiers to hunt me down. I was chased through the countryside and up into the forest to the foot of Lonely Mountain. To escape I had to climb the high icy cliffs. I saw smoke drifting from a cave. I thought, maybe a troll lives here and I can steal his cave. I went in. A huge (bigger than me) old troll sat by a fire smoking a pipe. He was ancient! His tusks were longer than any troll's I had ever met.

"Welcome Viktor," the old troll said.

"How do you know my name?" I demanded.

"My pipe told me you were coming," he answered, "it has magical powers. You may stay here but you must promise to change or I will throw you back down the mountain to be torn apart by the soldiers."

"An ancient troll like you? Ha! I'll do the throwing." I rushed at him but before I could grab him, I was enveloped in a cloud of smoke that made me so sleepy I collapsed in an instant.
When I awoke the old troll was sitting beside me holding a bowl of bat soup. He asked, "Viktor, will you change?"

"Change how? From what?" I said.

"From a mean and bullying boy to a strong and able troll man," he answered.

"Why should I?" I growled.

"Are you content with your life? Do you want to be chased down by those soldiers. If you leave here now, that's what will happen. Your family will have nothing to do with you now that you've bullied them. The Troll King will not let you into Big Mountain because even if he's a little proud of your exploits against the humans, he knows you have nothing good to give the troll kingdom. To survive you must conquer your need to be feared."

He was right. I agreed to change. I stayed in the cave with him for months before his pipe told him it was safe for me to go down the mountain. He set me many tasks. I had to secretly leave stacks of firewood I had cut and split, repair barns, and rebuild wells for the people I had terrorized. I had to bring meat for their dogs who had cowered at my smell. I left food for my family outside the mouth of our cave.

Despite all these good deeds, I was still feared and hated. One day the old troll revealed that he was my grandfather, that he had once been *The Terrible Troll* himself, and though he had made amends like me, he had to remain alone up on Lonely Mountain. Luckily, he had made a few friends among the trolls and they came to visit him once in a while. Old Olle, *The Thief of the Hills,* had brought him the magic pipe as a gift many years before.

"But you can make a new life, Viktor. You can find a home in America where no one will know you as the *The Terrible Troll.* Take my pipe it will guide you there. Be a friend to all trolls in that new land. They will need a friend. You know how hard it is to leave behind everyone and everything."

And so, I packed a few things, especially tobacco, I said farewell to my grandfather and snuck down the mountain. The smoke of the pipe hid me from people so I was able to make my way to the port and find a ship headed to America. I had to smoke day and night to remain hidden. And when I at last arrived here in Astoria, I couldn't stop. It took me years to finally conquer my smoking habit, but at last I did.

At first it was lonely here. I was the first and only troll for many years. Luckily, I made some human friends. I learned how to catch and smoke salmon and made a life. My pipe told me it could send messages to trolls who had touched it. So, I sent messages to Olle about life here in Astoria. One by one the other trolls came and I made them welcome. We have a good life here now, even Leif, though he's too grumpy to admit it. That is my story.

Instructions: Color Viktor and draw him in his former home in Lonely Mountain.

Margit Trollsdottir and the Cat

by Lloyd Bowler

Everyone knows that trolls like living in nasty dark, dank holes in the ground. They mostly find an empty cave and move in, even if there is a bear living in it first! Most trolls are grumpy, grouchy, smelly critters and most people don't like being around them (for good reason, phew, the smell!!). Margit's family was different though. They lived in a clean (for a troll) house and they were generally friendly, happy trolls. That didn't get them any troll friends since most trolls don't want friends! Margit was a happy little troll, only 331 years old and full of fun and mischief. She couldn't share her happiness with any other troll children. They were too busy being nasty and mean! Poor Margit was not entirely happy. There was a little bit of Margit that was lonely; she wanted a friend!

But where could she find a friend? The other troll children pulled her pigtails and did other mean tricks, so no friends there! She tried making friends with all sorts of Norwegian critters. They were too busy to be her friend.

One day her troll family smelled some special smoke. It came from Victor's magical pipe. It floated all the way from Astoria to Norway (cause that's what magical pipes can do!). Victor was puffing away by the Astoria riverfront enjoying the rainy dark weather and thought he should share his happiness with his friends back home. When the troll family smelled the message in the smoke, Margit said, "Why don't we go to Astoria; it smells like a lovely place! Perhaps I can find a friend there who won't pull my pigtails." Victor's pipe always tells the truth, so her parents said, "Let's go!"

Margit's family became the first troll family in Astoria. Margit loved to sit by Victor down by the riverfront and watch the boats go by and the fishermen haul in salmon. But she was still lonely. Victor was nice and her family was jolly (for trolls) but she still wanted a friend. She tried making friends with all of the Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, and Danish children in the neighborhood. No matter how many baths they take, trolls still smell like a cannery on a hot summer day, so it was difficult for the human kids to be around Margit. They got tired of holding their noses!

The fishermen would sometimes give the trolls salmon for their dinner. Trolls love salmon; next to Billy goats, it's the best thing to eat! One day, a gillnetter gave Victor a huge Chinook salmon. Victor said he couldn't eat all of that huge fish all by himself, so he gave half to Margit to take home to her family.

Margit threw the salmon over her shoulder and started back through the woods to the troll cave in Alderbook. On the way to the troll cave, Margit suddenly had the feeling she was being followed! She hid behind a tree, but didn't see anything on the trail behind her. She knew she was being followed (trolls just know stuff like that) so she waited. Sure enough, along came a critter sneaking through the bush. Margit had seen critters like this in Astoria, but this was the closest one had come to her. What was this animal anyway? Margit didn't want to scare it since it was a lot smaller than herself, so she sat down on the ground and waited for it to get closer. It was furry, with orange and white stripes. It also had great big yellow eyes and a round tummy.

The critter sat down as soon as it saw Margit sitting on the ground. For a long time, the two of them just stared at each other. Margit wondered what this critter was and the cat (for it was a tabby cat) wondered how it could get a bit of that tasty fish! Finally, Margit said, "HEY YOU!" (Trolls shout all the time since when they get together, they're always arguing!) WHAT KIND OF CRITTER ARE YOU?" Of course, that scared the cat, but it crouched down, pulled its ears back and hissed! It wasn't going anywhere without some salmon!

Well now, what to do? Margit thought the critter just might make a good friend since it had a tail and didn't run away. It also looked furry and cuddly. Hmm, while she was thinking, Margit pulled off a piece of salmon for a snack. MMM, that salmon was tasty. When the cat saw Margit having a bit of salmon, it just could not help but saying "MEOW!" (In cat talk, that means, "HEY, give me a bite too. I like salmon!")

Margit didn't understand cat language then, but she could tell by the big glowing eyes intent on the salmon that the cat was hungry. She broke off a small piece of fish and tossed it to the cat. That salmon never touched the ground! The cat leaped for the morsel and ate it in one bite!

"That was cute," thought Margit. "This critter really likes its salmon! I wonder if I can get it to come to me?" She tossed the next bit of salmon several feet in front of the cat. The cat looked at the salmon, looked at Margit, and looked back at the salmon.

"Well now, what to do?" thought the cat. That salmon sure tasted great and here's another bit just begging to be eaten! So, the cat slipped slowly closer to the salmon, always keeping one eye on Margit and one eye on the salmon. MMMMMM! This piece of salmon tasted even better and the cat started purring in delight!

Margit had never heard purring before, but the sound was gentle and it made Margit feel happy inside. Speaking in almost a troll whisper, Margit said, "You have a lovely voice, I wish I knew what you're saying." She dropped another piece of fish even closer than before and waited to see what the cat would do. In two shakes of a cat's tail, the cat slunk up to the bit of

fish and gulped it down. By this time the purrs were a deep loud rumble and the cat's eyes glowed like two suns because it was so very happy!

"Okay," thought Margit, "this time I'm going to lay a piece in my lap and see what happens." Well, what happened was the cat climbed right into Margit's lap and ate that fish, purring happily the entire time. Margit just looked down at it and when the cat had finished its snack, it looked up at Margit and wasn't afraid at all (even if it was sitting in a troll's lap!). The critter sat up and rubbed its nose on Margit's chin. Then it curled up in Margit's lap with a contented "meow" that means in cat talk, "You're a pretty nice kid. I think I'll take a nap here."

"Well now," thought Margit, "this critter is in my lap and seems to be happy. What should I do?" The cat was still purring and Margit was curious so she did the right thing quite by accident! She petted the cat and was delighted to feel the soft silky fur and the gentle rumbles from the purring. All that petting made the cat very happy so it rolled over on its back, stretched out its legs, and meowed, "Don't forget to scratch my tummy!" It also meowed, "This is a great lap, and all your petting and scratching is purrrrrfect so I think I'll stay right here!"

Margit didn't understand exactly what the cat meant, but she was smart enough to realize she had her first friend in America!

Eventually Margit fed the cat so much salmon and tuna that the round little belly soon became a round big belly and the cat had a name (finally) - Fat Cat! Margit and Fat Cat lived together with Margit's family for a long time. They eventually learned each other's language and had many adventures together, but the tale of those adventures is something for another time.

Instructions: Color Margit and draw her chatting with a new friend she made in Astoria.

Olle and the Lost Toys

By James Dott

Have you ever lost a favorite toy? It may not have been lost. It might have been stolen. Though Olle is one of the oldest trolls in the park (only trolls over 700 years old have tusk-like teeth), he is still very young at heart and he loves playing with toys.

Troll children don't have many toys mainly because they break them as soon as they get them. A rock shaped like a bear or caribou is the best toy for a troll child but even those get crunched. Slabs of wood make good dolls until they are thrown in the fire. A round stone is a great toy until you hit your father in the head with it and he angrily crushes it to dust.

Olle was different. He was fascinated with human children's toys and would often pick them up from where kids had left them out in the yard. We might call it stealing but trolls, especially Olle, call it "finders keepers." He would bring home carved horses, wooden soldiers, dolls, tiny wagons with wheels that really rolled, balls, and sling shots. They didn't last long once his older brothers and sisters got ahold of them, but Olle enjoyed them while he could. He enjoyed the hunt for new ones even more. Olle was always looking for new and better and bigger toys. At first, he only took toys he found outside on the ground but as the years and centuries passed, he began to go into barns and take wagons and horses, oxen and plows. Then he started sneaking into houses taking small things at first - candles, plates, bowls, but then pots, pans, and finally chairs, tables, and beds. Of course, they were quickly broken in the rough play of trolls.

Olle began giving his "finds" to other trolls. One night he found a pipe in a farmer's house and gave it to Viktor's grandfather. Another night he took an accordion from a famous musician's home in the city (luckily for the musician it was his spare) and gave it to Sven. Humans began to call the taker of all these things *The Thief of the Hills.* Rewards were offered for his capture. Still Olle sought out bigger "toys." Once, while the King was at the Opera (Annette was singing the part of Brunhilde that night), Olle took the King's coach with its six horses and drove it through the vast forest all the way to Big Mountain and presented it to the Troll King.

Eventually, even the cleverest thief makes a mistake. Soon after stealing the Human King's coach, Olle snuck into the King's palace the night before his daughter's wedding and stole her wedding dress. Olle took the dress back to the caves of Big Mountain, but none of the troll girls

wanted such an ugly white garment. His younger sister, Margit, tossed it out of the cave where it caught on the branch of a giant spruce.

The Human King had hired the best tracker in the land to find the culprit. The tracker found the dress hanging outside the entrance to the caves of Big Mountain. The Human King assembled his army at the entrance and threatened the trolls with destruction. The Troll King realized that he was in a tight spot and ordered as many of the stolen items as could be found returned. When his coach and horses were returned, the Human King relaxed a little and was willing to withdraw his troops if the Troll King would banish the thief. The Troll King agreed and exiled Olle, *The Thief of the Hills,* to Astoria.

“Olle,” the Troll King said, “you must leave Big Mountain and this land. I have booked you passage on a ship bound for a place called San Francisco in America. You must never return here and you might want to cut back on taking humans’ things. They really don’t like it.”

Olle left and took a berth on the same ship Annette snuck aboard. They never saw each other since he spent the whole time being seasick. When he arrived in San Francisco, Olle took up stealing again from gold miners and was almost caught, so he got out of town and took another ship north to Astoria where he landed and now seeks only toys that are left out by children. So, take your parents’ advice, “Pick up your toys.” If you don’t, Olle might take them.

Instructions: Color Olle and surround him with lots of toys so he won't have to swipe them from visitors to the park.

Sven, Master of the Accordion

By James Dott

Sven is a middle-aged troll. He's about 700 years old. You can tell because his tusks are just beginning to grow in. The older a troll gets the bigger his tusk-teeth grow. Sven was an ordinary lad, content to stomp around the woods with the other troll kids, steal eggs and sometimes a chicken from human farms, sneak off with their skis on winter nights, get farm dogs to chase them into a bog, and sleep away the days deep in the caves of Big Mountain.

One night when he was trudging home through the snow after a night of skiing, he heard a most wonderful sound coming from a lonely farm house. He crept closer and since no dog barked, he went right up to the window that the sound and the lamp light spilled from. Inside he could see a white-haired, white-bearded human squeezing and pulling on a strange looking box that got bigger and smaller as he pulled and pushed. This *squeeze-box* was making the wonderful sounds. Sven stood there listening until the old man yawned, placed the thing on a chair, and went to bed. As soon as he heard snoring, Sven slipped into the house and carefully picked up the magical box. It let out a squawk. Before he could run, the old man leaped from his bed and grabbed Sven by the ear.

"Aha, you little thief, what were you thinking? My old accordion has no value. What were you going to do with it?" The old man demanded.

"P-p-play it," Sven answered.

"Let's hear," commanded the old man, pinching Sven's ear.

Sven pulled the accordion open and then pushed it together. Horrible squeaks and squawks rattled the room. The old man laughed, "O ho! Just as I thought. You have no idea how to play."

Then he noticed Sven's tail, "Ohhh, and you're a nasty little troll kid too! Give me one reason why I shouldn't toss you over the cliff into the fjord?"

"I-I-I want to play. It sounds so beautiful. Teach me!" Sven pleaded.

The old man stared at Sven. Surprised and tempted by the request, “what’s your name, lad?”

“Sven.”

“Well, Sven, come here tomorrow night for your first lesson. The first will be free, but if you want more, you will have to earn them.”

Sven came back the next night and was able to make sweeter squeaks and squawks. He agreed to work for more lessons and moved to the old man’s farm where he slept in the barn. The old man was meaner than most trolls. He rousted Sven up to milk the cow, gather eggs, plow the fields, split fire wood, and haul water from the well. Sven was exhausted by lesson time but he proved an able student and was soon playing whole tunes on the old man’s accordion.

The old man still played at local festivals and celebrations. He dressed Sven in human clothes and took him along to play. Human folk called Sven an “ugly little fellow,” but loved to dance to his polkas and waltzes. Soon Sven did all the playing though the old man still pocketed all the pay.

One day after a long cold wet walk home from a dance, the old man fell ill and took to his bed. He stopped eating and drinking. He had strength enough to write a letter to his daughter and then lay coughing and sleeping. That evening of his illness, the old man called Sven to his bedside and whispered in a raspy voice, “I have taught you all I know. It’s time for me to go. Take the accordion and this.” He handed Sven a bag of coins. “You do not want to be here when my daughter comes. But first play my favorite tune.”

Sven picked up the accordion and played. At the end of the tune, the old man lay still with a contented smile on his face. Sven wrapped the accordion in a cloth and left the farm for Big Mountain.

Sven didn’t get a warm welcome when he returned. But when he played the accordion for his family, they leaped and danced around the musty old cave. Soon he became a court musician for the Troll King. The trolls did not dance gracefully like humans but stomped and leaped and threw each other around. Still, they loved Sven’s playing.

One morning after playing all night at a wild party for the King, Sven was heading to his room in the cave when three of his old friends, still in a wild mood, decided to play a game of keep away with his accordion. One grabbed it and tossed it to the second troll who tossed it to the third. (I bet you know how this ends.) The third troll tossed it straight up. The other two rushed to catch it, tripped, and collided crushing the accordion between them. It gave out a dying squawk. “Oops,” they cried and ran off laughing. The accordion was smashed beyond repair. Since he had no instrument to play, Sven was kicked out of the King’s caves. His family would not have

him back so he found a hollow to sleep in under a boulder deep in the woods. He stayed alone, living off the land, for many years.

One night, deep in winter, he heard someone calling his name, “Sven, Sven, it is me. Olle. I have a gift for you.”

Sven and Olle had played together as children and Sven remembered that Olle had become a master thief, known as *The Thief of the Hills*. Sven called out and guided Olle to his boulder. Olle came crunching through the snow carrying a beautiful black box with a silver handle, silver hinges, and silver latches. Olle placed it in Sven’s hands.

“Open it,” Olle said. Sven carefully undid the latches and lifted the lid. Inside, nestled in red velvet, was an accordion with mother of pearl inlays. “Play it Sven,” said Olle. Sven carefully lifted the accordion out of the box and hesitantly began to play. He was amazed, it sounded so much better than the old man’s battered instrument. Olle spoke, “Sven, I have heard of this place called Astoria where many humans are finding a new life far from here. Some trolls have gone there too. Do you remember Viktor? He has gone there and sends word it is a good place. You should go there and play these wonderful tunes.”

“Thank you, Olle,” said Sven, “maybe I will see you in Astoria.”

“Perhaps,” said Olle, “but I have a few more adventures here.”

So, Sven made his way by foot and ship to Astoria where he now plays his accordion for anyone who loves a good tune.

Instructions: Color Sven and add some happy people and dancers who enjoy Sven's music.

The Musical Adventures of Annette
By James Dott

Most trolls are not very musical. They cannot carry a tune or keep a beat. Even as a young troll Annette was different. She learned the songs of all the birds and when she sang them the birds flocked to her. One Christmas Eve she was out playing in the snow with a bunch of other young trolls when she heard the most beautiful sounds. It was a church choir singing carols. She left the other trolls and peered in through the frosted windows and listened for hours. Soon she was sneaking out of her cave every Sunday to listen to the choir and in no time was quietly singing along. One day the choir master heard her voice from outside the window. He peered out to see who belonged to such a wonderful voice. He saw the ugliest, dirtiest child he had ever seen. Annette was still young enough that her tail had not grown very long.

The choir master went out to invite her in, “Come in out of the cold, my dear child, and sing with us.” But Annette had been warned to stay away from humans and so she fled. Yet she came back week after week, and at last the choir master got her to come into the church. The other members of the choir complained about how ugly she was and how bad she smelled. But the choir master hushed them, saying, “That matters not. She has the voice of an angel,” and they had to agree. She was an amazing singer. Years went by and Annette became famous throughout the land and was invited to join the Royal Opera Company in the capital. By now she had learned how to hide her trollishness and even take baths and cover her troll stink with perfumes. But the other singers were jealous, for she got all the best parts and even though she was ugly, she never seemed to age. A group of these singers decided to find out the secret of her success for they knew she was not a normal person and suspected she was using magical or even evil powers. They bored a hole in the wall of her dressing room so they could spy on her and took turns watching before, during, and after performances. One night, after the final opera of the season, one of these girls, peering through the spy hole, saw Annette remove her costume and glimpsed her tail. “She’s a troll! She’s a troll!” she cried to the others. They charged into her dressing room and proved it to themselves, and then ran her out of the opera house.

Poor Annette could not stay in the capital. She could not go back to her troll family. She had been disowned years before for joining the human world. She made her way to the harbor and snuck aboard a passenger ship bound for America. That ship took her to San Francisco. In the port, Annette heard many humans from the troll countries were living in a place called Astoria

so she snuck aboard a ship bound for there. The ship was crossing the Columbia River bar during a winter storm when it got shoved off course and ran aground. Annette was swept into the icy waters of the Columbia. Trolls cannot swim but they can hold their breath for a long time and since Annette had trained as a singer, she could hold her breath for a really long time. Down into the frigid depths she sank. Luckily, trolls can also tolerate cold much better than humans.

Annette was swept upriver for hours on the incoming tide and bumped into a sea lion out for a night swim. The sea lion, realizing she was not delicious salmon or a bothersome human, swam beneath her and lifted her up to the surface of the river where she took in a long deep breath and then began to sing.

It was a song of thanks to the sea lion for saving her and a tale of her long journey from Troll Mountain to the Opera House to here, where the lights of Astoria shone through the rain. The sea lion loved the song (sea lions can understand *Troll* and Trolls can understand *Sea Lion*) and swam her to his resting place on Astoria's docks. There, the other sea lions listened and then all joined Annette in singing the opera of her life.

Here in Astoria, Annette has found new and old troll friends, except for grumpy Leif who has no friends and prefers it that way. She enjoys meeting humans and can be very friendly to them as long as they don't ask about her time singing with the Royal Opera.

Though Annette spends her days welcoming humans like you to the Nordic Heritage Park, she spends nights singing opera with the sea lions. If you listen carefully late at night, you can hear her sweeping solos above the sea lions' barking.

Instructions: Color Annette and add some sealions singing along with her.

Leif, The Grumpy Troll

By James Dott

All trolls are grumpy sometimes (this is true for humans too). Many trolls are grumpy a good bit of the time. Some trolls are grumpy most of the time. But Leif, well, Leif is grumpy ALL of time. He is the grumpiest troll in Astoria. He is probably the grumpiest troll in the whole world! Why is he so grumpy? Let him tell you.

"I am *Leif-the-Troll,* and yes, I am grumpy. I have LOTS to be grumpy about. I am grumpy about those nasty goats that butted me off my bridge back in Norway. You humans call that story *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* but it should be called *Poor Leif and the Gruesome Goats.* After I recovered from my wounds, I heard there was a nice big bridge without a troll here in Astoria. So, wanting to get far, far away from those horrible Gruff brothers I moved here. Yes, the bridge is big. but it is too noisy and too dangerous for a troll. I tried to collect my toll from humans crossing in their cars and trucks. I nearly got killed! They wouldn't stop. They honked their horns. One car even ran over my feet. Oh, my poor ears, my poor toes! That made me grumpy.

"Do you know how much it rains here in Astoria? If you let all the rain pile up here, it would be taller than the tallest human! I have to carry my leaf with me every day to keep the rain off of me. People tell me, "It's just a shower." I hate showers! We trolls never take showers or baths. We do not smell right if we do. If we don't smell right (yes, I know you would say "stink"), we get very grumpy! We had rain back in Norway, but not ALL yearlong! We had snow too and it lasted months. Rain is grumpifying; snow is wonderful. We young trolls would steal a human's sled or skis and go sliding down the mountain on cold starry nights. If it snows here, it only lasts part of a day and there are no sleds or skis leaned up outside of human houses to steal. That makes me grumpy!

"Back in Norway, we had caves we could sleep in all day. There are no caves here in Astoria. Humans come around the park everyday staring at me asking me if I know the Billy Goats Gruff. Ha, ha, very funny.

"People think I am named after Leif Erickson. He was that Viking who sailed to Greenland and then maybe came to North America many, many years ago. Wrong! I was not named after him. I was born many, many years before him so, he was probably named after me. He never came

here anyway. so why did they name a street after him? It's called *Leif Erikson Drive.* He knew how to sail, but he did not know how to drive. They should have named it *Leif-the-Troll Drive*. If they did, I would learn how to drive. But they did not, so I won't! They named *Astoria* after another human who never even visited here - John Jacob Astor. They should have named it *Leifshage* (that means "Leif's Garden"), or at least they could have named it *Trollbyen* (which means *Troll Town*). Yes, even the name of this town makes me grumpy!

"It is not only you humans that make me grumpy. Those sea lions are always barking, barking! Can you hear them? The other trolls told me I'd get used to it. I haven't. All that barking makes me more and more GRUMPY! Do you know that nasty cat that other troll, Margit, drags around all day? She calls it Fat Cat. Well at night, it loves to pounce on my head and yowl in my ears. That makes me grumpy and is another reason I need my leaf for protection. The cat never bothers any of the other trolls and that makes me even grumpier.

"I used to walk on the River Walk but gulls would drop their you-know-what on me and every spring a lot of the other birds would yank out my hair for their nests. Ouch, that hurt and made me REALLY grumpy! It is another reason why now I always keep a leaf over my head. I also do not walk on the River Walk because I do not like dogs. Why? Because dogs do not like me. There are lots of dogs and their humans on the River Walk. When I did walk on the River Walk, dogs would pull on their leashes and try to sink their teeth in me. Once an ugly little mutt succeeded in biting me. But he was sorry. We trolls taste terrible! He howled and whined and foamed at the mouth as his human dragged him away. I was NOT grumpy about that! But now humans bring their dogs into our little park. The dogs sniff me, growl at me, and even… This park is not a bathroom for dogs! Dogs and their humans make me grumpy!

"As you can see, I have a lot to grump about. There is a lot more I could tell you but I am too grumpy to keep talking. Now, go away and have a bad day!"

Instructions: Color Leif and draw somethings that you think would make him less grumpy.

Astoria Nordic Heritage Park was a seven-year project of the Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association and its members and donors. The park is located on the Astoria River Walk on the banks of the Columbia River at the east entrance to the Historic Downtown District. For more details, visit www.AstoriaNordicPark.org.

The six troll figures in Astoria Nordic Heritage Park were created by **Turnstone Construction** in Redmond, Washington with **Benjamin James** as lead designer. James is a sculptor and illustrator based in Tacoma, Washington. His inspiration comes from everywhere including nature, fiction, and his chaotic twin daughters who specifically inspired the design of Margit Trollsdottir.

James Dott is a writer whose first love is poetry. He retired after thirty years as an elementary teacher and lives with his family in Astoria, Oregon. He is a volunteer programmer at Coast Community Radio and active in community theater. One of his longtime projects was writing the troll skits for KMUN's monthly live radio show called Troll Radio Review.

Lloyd Bowler is a retired teacher who has been reading Bedtime Stories on Coast Community Radio for over thirty years. He's an active member of the Astoria Nordic community, former Scandia Dancer, Astoria Trolley conductor, and docent at the Columbia River Maritime Museum. Most mornings he's at the park picking up trash.

The City of Astoria owns Astoria Nordic Heritage Park but the Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association is responsible for maintenance and upkeep of all park features. Visit www.AstoriaNordicPark.org to learn more or make a donation.